



The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.
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The Shalosh Regalim

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In Leviticus 23, God carefully details and prescribes observances for eight feasts that are eternal pictures of God's prophetic work of redemption for the world. In several places in the Torah (the writings of Moses) God further emphasizes and highlights three of those eight mentioned in Leviticus 23. They are known as the "Pilgrim Festivals" or in Hebrew, the "*Shalosh Regalim*". The reason they are called "pilgrim" festivals is because the scripture makes it clear that Jews who lived far away were to make the sacrifice and travel to Jerusalem specifically for these three feasts. Deuteronomy 16:16-17 says, "*Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) and at the Feast of Weeks (Shavuot or Pentecost) and at the Feast of Booths (Sukkot), and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you.*" This scripture in Deuteronomy is a reiteration of Exodus 23 where Israel was first commanded to celebrate the *Shalosh Regalim*. Therefore it seems that the three most important Holy Days according to the Bible are the *Shalosh Regalim (Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot)*, and Jesus celebrated them. The New Covenant Scriptures records Yeshua's/Jesus faithful attendance of these three festivals in addition to his regular observance of Shabbat.

In traditional Judaism however, the three most important Holy Days as prescribed in the scripture passages above are not the ones emphasized. **Passover, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur** are the feasts of importance and priority in traditional Judaism. Why do traditional Jews today attach more importance to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur as opposed to Sukkot? The answer to this question is



simply God's design. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur deal with **sin and atonement for sin**. Jewish people who don't know Yeshua/Jesus are still dealing with the issue of sin and atonement for sin on a yearly basis. This is because the rabbis teach that God opens "**The Book of Life**" on Rosh Hashanah and that **Jewish people have ten days, known as "Yamim Noraim," (The Days of Awe) to perform mitzvot (righteous deeds), repent and give Tzedaka (charity) as a means for atoning for the sins of the past year and having their names inscribed in The Book of Life for the coming year.** The rabbis teach that there are three types of Jews. 1. Those who are so

righteous (Tzadikim) that they are automatically forgiven and have their names inscribed in *The Book of Life*. 2. The Second category is the average Jewish person. The average Jew is somewhat religious; they may be in synagogue on Festivals, and occasionally throughout the year may attend

Shabbat services, and are basically decent citizens. Such people are encouraged to perform righteous deeds, give charity and repent during this season in order to have their names inscribed in *The Book of Life* for the coming year. 3. The third category is Jewish people who are apostate or who have so much sin they are considered beyond redemption. David Berkowitz, the Son of Sam, a serial killer might fall into such a category; although, Berkowitz is said to be a follower of Jesus now. Messianic Jews would also be considered apostates by devout Orthodox Jews. **So for Jews, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are two of the three most important Holy Days because they deal with sin, atonement, repentance, forgiveness and getting one's name into the Book of Life.**

Passover is the only Shalosh Regaleem festival to which traditional Jewish people ascribe major significance. Messianic Jews and Christians know that

"Messiah is our Passover, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world..." (JN 1:29, 1Cor5:6-8). All four Gospels clearly explain that Yeshua's Last Supper was a Passover meal, and that He was crucified, buried and resurrected during the seven days of Passover; this understanding brings great significance to the feast and its importance to those in Messiah. But traditional Jews who aren't familiar with the Gospels generally **don't perceive Jesus as "The Lamb of God" who bore the sins of the world.** In other words, this concept of Yeshua/Jesus being THE one and only sacrificial Passover Lamb for all time, a sinless human being who offered Himself willingly to take on our sins, is unseen or hidden by traditional Judaism. To Jewish people, Passover is all about Moses and the Exodus from Egypt. It's all about redemption from slavery to Pharaoh and God's miracles such as the parting of the Red Sea. Passover is about the suffering of our Jewish people while in bondage in Egypt, and the sweetness of redemption!!! When Jewish people hear about "Jesus dying on the cross for our sins and resurrecting on the third day", they don't associate that concept with Passover at all. Scholars and Rabbis may understand the Biblical connection and relationship of this idea, but not the average person.

So how should Christians approach the Shalosh Regaleem? Do they still have significance? Most Christians and Messianic believers know that in Messiah we are no longer under "The curse of the Torah/Law:" ***"But it shall come about, if you will not obey the Lord your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you, DT 28:15.*** (Read DT 28 to learn more about "The Blessings and the Curses.")

However, the Brit Chadasha/New Covenant says, ***"Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us – for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree," In order that in Messiah Yeshua the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," Gal 3:13-14.*** So those of us who believe in the Messiah are no longer under the curses of the Torah as listed in Deuteronomy 28. Furthermore, nowhere in the Bible does it say that the blessings of Torah were done away with! All through the Bible, Old and New Covenant, Gentiles (Proselytes, see Acts 2, Acts 10-11) pilgrimaged to the Temple and to synagogues to worship together with Jews, learning and incorporating the Torah into their daily lives! So while much of Christianity views the Torah/Law as done away with, Messianic Judaism takes the position that the blessings of the Torah are still available to us and that those in Messiah are no longer under a curse. Hallelujah!!! That's why Messianic Jewish believers celebrate Torah! That's why we celebrate the ***Shalosh Regalim, the Shabbat, and many other things. We do not do this according to the letter, for the letter kills, but according to***

the Spirit, for the Spirit gives life! I will be teaching about the blessings to those who celebrate God's Feasts this month, and I invite you to come and learn more about these things (see the schedule for times).

Should Christians celebrate the Shalosh Regalim and/or Jewish Holy Days on their own?

According to *Numbers 15:14-16*, ***"If an alien sojourns with you, or one who may be among you throughout your generations, and he wishes to make an offering by fire, as a soothing aroma to the Lord, just as you do so shall he do. As for the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the alien who sojourns with you, a perpetual statute throughout your generations; As you are, so shall the alien be before the Lord. There is to be one Torah/law and one ordinance for you and for the alien who sojourns with you."*** There was always a court of the Gentiles in the Temple at Jerusalem, and that's why there were Gentiles (Proselytes) in the Temple in Acts Chapter two. Those Gentiles didn't know that the Holy Spirit would be poured out on them that day; nevertheless, on that momentous day, on the ancient Feast of Weeks/Shavuot, God poured out a huge blessing on them!

The Jewish people were "chosen" to be a light unto the Gentiles as the Bible says in Isaiah 49:6. Why are we chosen? We were chosen to bring the Gospel and the blessings of Torah to the Gentiles. When Yeshua gave the great commission He said, ***"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations (Goyim in Hebrew, also meaning Gentiles), baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you..." MT 28:19-20.*** Remember, He celebrated all of the Biblical Feasts including Shabbat. These feasts are part of the commandments, and He instructed His disciples to teach the Gentiles about them! You don't believe me??? In Matthew 5, Yeshua said, ***"Do not think that I came to abolish the Torah/Law or the Prophets... Until Heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Torah until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."*** MT 5:17-19.

Conclusion:

We Messianic Jews believe that the blessings of Torah still apply today to all believers who would come together and sojourn or dwell with Messianic Jews. We believe that God passed the Torah and the Decalogue (Ten Commandments) down to the Jewish people only. We believe that the Jewish people were "Chosen" to gather the lost sheep from the house of Israel and to be a light to the nations (Isaiah 49:6) and that we were meant to share in the blessings of Torah together with our Gentile neighbors in Messiah! (See Isaiah 14:1, Isaiah 56, Zechariah 8:23, Ezekiel

47:21-23, Ephesians 2:11-4:6). The Bible says that a day is coming when all flesh will keep Biblical Sabbaths (Shabbat and Feasts), New Moons (Several Biblical Holy Days begin on New Moons) and the Feast of Sukkot/Booths: *“Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, “Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us His ways an that we may walk in His paths. For the Torah/Law will go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”* (Isaiah 2:2-3). Isaiah 66:23 also says, *“And it shall be from new moon to new moon And from Sabbath to Sabbath, All mankind will come to bow down before Me, says the Lord.”* Zechariah 14:16 says, *“Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths/Sukko.,”* Folks, God did not do away with the blessings of Torah, and it was always His intention for Jew and Gentile to come together in a synagogue or Temple and celebrate The Shalosh Regalim, the Sabbath and Feasts together as for non-Jewish people to observe Torah be together. I caution you to beware of affiliated with the Messianic Jewish grace and are not obligated to join withings of Torah. That decision is up to and one day in the certain future of His all be doing these things “Together.”



Shalom,
Rabbi Joe

2013 Fall Feast Schedule



Rosh Hashanah Service
Wednesday Sept. 4th at 6:30 pm
Refreshments to follow



Rosh Hashanah/Fall Feast
Overview Service
Friday, Sept. 6th at 7:00 pm
Refreshments to Follow



Tishrei 7/14 Prayer Service
Wednesday Sept 11th 6:30
(Fast Tuesday night to Wed Night)



Yom Kippur (Kol Nidre)
Friday Sept. 13th at 7:00 pm
[fasting begins]



Sukkot (Sept 19 - Sept26)
Rhythm & Roots Out-Reach
Weekend
Sept 20th—22nd
(Volunteers needed)



Sukkot Service (Hoshana Raba)
(The Last & Greatest day of the feast)
Wednesday, Sept 25th at 5:30 pm
Covered dish to follow

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Lion of Judah Messianic Congregation



Meets weekly

Saturdays

10:30 AM

1128 New Hampshire Ave.

Shabbat School

For Children 3-12 years old